

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Precision Pump and Valve Service

West Virginia Manufacturing Extension Partnership

Precision Pump and Valve Goes Lean

Client Profile:

Precision Pump and Valve Service, Inc. (PPVS) is a third generation family owned and operated industrial service business. PPVS sells, installs, and services a wide range of industrial and municipal pumps and valves from multiple suppliers. They perform complete cleaning and rebuilding of these items in their shop, offer 24 hour 7 day a week emergency field service, and also standard field service and product replacement work. Their clients include but are not limited to large power generating stations, industrial chemical plants and municipal water and sewer operations. They have approximately 50 employees and service companies in West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio and Pennsylvania, from the facility located in Cross Lanes, West Virginia.

Situation:

PPVS experienced steady growth for the past several years and added services and product lines as a result of customer demand. As a result of that growth the company has expanded the facility several times by "building on" to the existing structure, creating a series of connected work spaces. For some time, management has felt that their processes and layout lacked a good work flow, and that their productivity was suffering due to these problems. The company developed an improvement task force to examine these problems, but that effort seemed to lack focus and rarely moved forward with implementation of ideas. A member of management attended an open enrollment Lean 101 class and felt that Lean concepts and an outside consultant could provide that focus and help the company move forward with implementation. PPVS contacted the West Virginia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (WVMEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for assistance.

Solution:

As a result of PPVS's interest, WVMEP consultants met with them to discuss their operation and the specific problems they wanted to address. As a result of this meeting, the WVMEP proposed a Lean Training and Implementation Package to the company, which was accepted. The package consisted of Lean 101 training for the entire workforce, Value Stream Mapping for a core group, and an Implementation Support Retainer contract to provide ongoing help with the implementation. The WVMEP conducted three (3) Lean 101 sessions on consecutive days which covered all management and hourly personnel. This was followed quickly by a two-day VSM event for the core group of management and hourly personnel. After the company had a chance to review the VSM results and discuss the outcomes, a follow-up session was held with the team leaders of the effort and an implementation plan was developed which prioritized the improvement ideas and created a schedule.

Results:

* The entire workforce, approximately 50 employees, attended Lean 101 sessions and now understand the Lean concepts, creating a knowledge base within the company.

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* The core group of employees, approximately 14, participated in the Value Stream Mapping event and will take lead rolls in the implementation.

* identified key changes in the following areas:

- Order tracking and documentation
- Plant layout and process flow
- Location of key pieces of equipment
- Production scheduling techniques
- Work procedures and policies in the receiving evaluation area, teardown and assembly area, and final product testing
- Work balancing in the plant environment
- Staffing requirements for the plant and field personnel
- A new layout plan has been developed that will create a linear process flow within the plant and better utilized existing space.
- Work procedure changes have been implemented in the receiving evaluation area, and are being developed for the other key areas.
- An equipment acquisition and relocation plan has been developed and is being implemented.
- Changes have been made to the production scheduling procedures.
- Review of the order tracking and documentation process is under way.
- 5S training has been conducted and 5S activities are occurring.

Testimonial:

"We here at Precision are grateful for the lessons learned under the guidance of WVMEP. Our company has bought in to the concepts of Lean implementation, based in large part on the hands-on teaching methods utilized by the folks at WVMEP. Our entire workforce, and especially our labor force, has taken the lead on improving our company by applying Lean concepts taught by WVMEP. We look forward to working with WVMEP on our continuing efforts to improve profitability by eliminating waste and providing a better value to our customers."

Kevin Kemerer, Vice President and General Counsel